

AUSTRIAN INFORMATION

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EVACUATION OF AUSTRIA PROCEEDING RAPIDLY.

The French troop units which left Austria on September 9, 1955, were the first occupation forces to complete evacuation of the country. The last French troops to leave were transferred to the French Alps area. The only unit remaining in Austria is a civilian group winding up French occupation affairs.

The Americans have also evacuated the country to a large extent. Both in Vienna and in the former American zone of occupation, barracks, housing units and garages etc. are being turned back to the Austrian authorities on a regular basis. The USFA military train known as the "Mozart Express" made its last trip between Vienna and Salzburg on September 10. With the transfer to the Austrian authorities of the Stiftskaserne, the main US troop headquarters in Vienna — which also took place on September 10 — the only USFA unit left in Vienna is a 12-man rear-guard detachment.

The last British occupation troops left Vienna on September 19. Since nearly all of the British troops have already been evacuated from Styria and Carinthia, British troop headquarters will leave Austria on October 13, 1955.

The withdrawal of the Russian occupation troops is also
(Continued on page 2)

FIRST UNITS OF FEDERAL ARMY TO ENTER VIENNA.

A battalion of the "Provisional Border-Guard Units" will march into Vienna on September 26, 1955, as the first unit
(Continued on page 2)

NUMEROUS FEDERAL ARMY GARRISONS IN FORMER SOVIET ZONE OF AUSTRIA.

Austrian Chancellor Julius Raab will shortly make a number of inspection trips throughout Austria for the purpose of determining garrison locations for the new Austrian army. From September 13-15, accompanied by General Liebitzky, head of the Office for National Defense, the Chancellor visited 15 localities in what was formerly the Soviet zone of Austria. On September 20, he inspected the selected garrison sites for Voralberg and on September 21 the quarters for the new army in Tyrol.

CHANCELLOR RAAB PROMISES PROTECTION OF AUSTRIAN FRONTIERS.

In connection with the adoption of the new Defense Law, Chancellor Julius Raab declared that the time has now come to transfer military units to the former Soviet zone of occupation in Austria. The selection of sites for garrisons will be determined to a large extent by the structure of the new Federal Army, which will consist primarily of small and highly mobile units. "It is self-evident," declared Chancellor Raab, "that in setting up the new

garrisons, due account should be taken of the frontiers which we feel to be particularly sensitive ones." Continuing, Herr Raab declared that, although it is important to give visible evidence as soon as possible of Austria's determination to defend her neutrality, it will nevertheless not be possible



One of the 14 New Gobelins in the rebuilt Vienna State Opera depicting the "Queen of the Night" from Mozart's "Magic Flute"

THE REBUILT VIENNA OPERA

Special Supplement

on page 6

to call up the first complete age group for military duty before the spring of 1956. He also indicated that in calling up the soldiers, consideration would be given to the requirements of industry and agriculture, as well as of other special social factors. The Chancellor declared that Austria has no desire to set up an army for parade purposes and that the equipping of the new force would be subordinated first and foremost to considerations of what is appropriate.

UNIVERSAL MILITARY TRAINING VOTED BY PARLIAMENT. The new Defense Law was adopted by the Parliament on September 7, 1955, by the votes of both Government parties. The vote took place during a special session lasting several days.

The new law is based on the principles of universal military training and of the cadre type of army. Only the cadre officers of the Federal Army will be professional soldiers. The institution of professional non-commissioned officers, which existed until 1938, was dropped and the non-coms will be drawn from the ranks of qualified soldiers who volunteer for longer service. The officer corps will be filled with appropriate candidates from the ranks of the non-commissioned officers. An adequate reserve of officers and non-coms will be trained by means of appropriate schooling, courses and drills. The flying personnel of the new air force will be recruited primarily from men volunteering for longer periods of service.

The general period of military duty will be for 9 months and will apply to those age groups which have not yet done military service. During the period of military duty, the civil rights of conscripts will be fully maintained, although any political activity in service and in military quarters will be prohibited. Persons subject to and fit for military duty as well as members of the five youngest reserve categories will be allowed to travel abroad without official authorization.

Persons subject to military duty will be required to take the following oath of loyalty: "I swear to protect my native country, the Republic of Austria, and its people, to defend its boundaries and to take up arms for it wherever and whenever necessary. I swear that I will be loyal and obedient to the laws and the legal authorities, especially the Federal Government as appointed by the Federal President, that I will comply punctually and exactly with all commands of my superiors, that I will obey all their instructions and that I will serve the Republic of Austria and the Austrian people, in the interest of the welfare and security of my fellow citizens, with full conscientiousness and with all of my strength."

AUSTRIAN FRONTIERS (Cont'd from page 1)

of the new Austrian Federal Army. Before the State Treaty went into effect, the new army unit was a part of the Austrian Gendarmerie stationed in the province of Upper Austria.

Units of the Provisional Frontier Guard, which were hitherto stationed in Styria and only recently transferred to the former Soviet-occupied sections of Austria, recently held their first maneuvers in the Radkersburg area using motorized infantry and tanks.

CITIZENS OF 23 COUNTRIES MAY ENTER AUSTRIA WITHOUT VISA. On the basis of existing international agreements, citizens of the following countries are entitled to enter Austria without a visa for stays of up to two and three months respectively: the United States, Belgium, Chile, Denmark, the German Federal Republic, Finland, France, Greece, Great Britain, Ireland, Iceland, Italy, Lichtenstein, Luxembourg, Monaco, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, the Saar, San Marino, Sweden, Switzerland and Turkey.

Now that the State Treaty has gone into effect, subjects of the British Commonwealth and of the French Union require a visa for entering Austria.

EVACUATION (Cont'd from page 1)

proceeding according to plan. The Russians are using special trains made available by Austria. The last military detachment left the resort of Baden, near Vienna, on September 9. Baden had previously been the main headquarters of the Soviet occupation forces in Austria.

MOST IMPORTANT SOCIAL WELFARE LAW SINCE 1945 PASSED. On September 9, during the period of its special session, the Austrian Parliament adopted the new "General Social Insurance Law." While the debate on this legislation was going on, protest actions were carried out by Austrian physicians, who also called a two-day physicians' strike throughout the country. The new law covers the entire field of sickness, accident and pension insurance, relations between insured and physicians, dentists and other contractual partners, as well as the structure and management of the entities carrying the insurance. The text of the law, which runs for 300 printed pages, contains over 500 paragraphs, divided into 10 sections. In order that it might deal with this extensive material, the Social Welfare Committee of Parliament was declared to be on a permanent basis. Continuing its deliberations throughout the summer, it took approximately 110 proposed amendments under advisement.

The Vienna newspaper "Arbeiter-Zeitung" in part writes as follows on the new features provided by the codification of the Social Insurance Law: With respect to *pension insurance*, the new law credits workers, with a large part of their employment prior to January 1, 1939, not assessing them for this period, while office workers are given favorable credit for the periods before January 1, 1939, during which they were not insured. Both laborers and office workers will therefore receive adequate old-age pensions. Where his period of employment has been correspondingly long, the employee in private business will be given equal treatment with civil servants in the matter of drawing up pensions. In cases where insurance has been in effect too short a time and pensions are therefore inadequate to provide a livelihood, the communities will pay the difference. All pensioners will henceforth receive 13 pension payments per year. In the calculation of working time, periods of training and study will be reckoned as pre-work periods. Recipients of widows' pensions will receive a lump-sum payment equivalent to five years' pension payments in the event they remarry. Should the second marriage be terminated through death or divorce, the first widow's pension is reactivated. In the case

of widows who have children to take care of, new minimum pensions have been established. A possibility is also provided for continuing payment of orphan pensions in the event that children are still improvident or engaged in study after their 18th birthday.

In the matter of *accident insurance*, laborers and office workers have been placed on an equal footing, both groups now receiving invalidity pensions even if their earning capacity has been reduced by only 50%. In the field of *sickness insurance*, the law allows the right of free choice of a physician, increases payments in cases of sickness of long duration and provides improved maternity assistance.

The entire question of *unemployment insurance* was regulated in 1949 by a new law and is therefore not included in the new Social Insurance Law. Likewise, the sickness insurance of Government employees is not covered by the new law.

US ECONOMIC MISSION PRAISES AUSTRIA'S USE OF MARSHALL AID FUNDS. On the occasion of a visit with Austrian Minister of Trade Illig, G.E. Wyatt, the head of the American economic mission visiting Austria, declared that the principal reason for the visit of his group was to establish the greatest possible number of direct contacts with representatives of Austrian economic life. He stated that the mission was particularly impressed by the excellent use to which Marshall Plan funds had been put in Austria and by the overall economic development of the country. Mr. Wyatt reported that during the first two weeks of the mission's stay in Austria it had visited numerous plants and had held discussions with many businessmen concerning the establishment and expansion of economic relations between the U.S. and Austria.

GENERAL ARNOLD RETURNING TO US. Lieutenant-General Arnold, the commander of the United States Forces in Austria (USFA), will leave Salzburg on October 2, 1955, to assume command of the U.S. Fifth Army. USFA will be under command of Brigadier-General Nutter until it is finally dissolved.

CIVILIAN PILOT TRAINING RESUMED IN VIENNA. Following the evacuation of the former Soviet zone of Austria, the "First Austrian School for Fliers and Parachutists," which previously trained pilots at Thalerhof airfield in Graz, transferred its activities to the former civilian airfield at Vienna-Aspern. At the present time 10 planes are available as trainers for civilian pilots. The opening of other civilian flying schools at the airports in Linz, Salzburg, Innsbruck and Klagenfurt is scheduled for the spring of 1956.

26 BILLION SCHILLING BUDGET ANNOUNCED FOR 1956. Finance Minister Kamitz declared recently that the negotiations for drawing up the budget for 1956 have been completed by the agencies concerned, provision having been made for a balanced regular budget. Expenditures in the amount of 26 billion schillings as provided in this budget will be completely covered. The special budget for 1956 provides for an outlay of only slightly more than 900 million schillings, which is less by almost half than the special budget figure for 1955. Experience has shown that budgetary deficits of such small proportions are always balanced during the fiscal

year by excess receipts or by economies. Although expenditures on public works are being reduced to a level compatible with the economic situation, construction of the Salzburg-Vienna expressway, electrification of the railroad line between Vienna and Tarvis, work on buildings connected with cultural affairs and the modernization of the police force will be continued on a full scale. The Finance Minister expressed his satisfaction that it has proved possible, despite the burdens imposed by the State Treaty, to draw up a balanced budget and to continue the economic and political policies pursued hitherto.

LEGAL REQUIREMENTS ESTABLISHED FOR FUNCTIONING OF CAPITAL MARKET. During the special session of the Austrian Parliament which took place September 7-9, the Lower House gave its approval to the legislation known as the "Capital Market Laws." These include the National Bank Law, the Bank Reconstruction Law and the Insurance-Reconstruction Law. Since Austria will not be able to do without investment of foreign capital in the future, it had become necessary to provide a legal basis for exhausting the possibilities for raising capital in Austria, thereby creating the necessary atmosphere of confidence abroad. Under the National Bank Law, a firm legal foundation, in the form of a stock corporation, was provided for Austria's bank of issuance, an action which also represents a further step toward ensuring the stability of Austrian currency. The Bank Reconstruction Law enables banks and credit institutions, at long last, to draw up completely revaluated balance sheets and thereby to liquidate one of the heaviest economic legacies from the period of Hitler's occupation. The Insurance-Reconstruction Law makes a final settlement with respect to payments by insurance companies in terms of reductions and decreases in savings deposits up to 1945, with the Government assuming obligations in the amount of 365 million schillings.

NEW LOW FOR AUSTRIAN UNEMPLOYMENT. At the end of August, the number of persons registered in all parts of Austria as seeking employment was only 65,447. This is the lowest unemployment figure recorded since the founding of the Austrian Republic. The figure is 6,152 less than the July totals, the reduction primarily involving the garment and textile industries, building trade, unskilled labor, hotel and restaurant employees and wood and timber workers. As a result, the number of gainfully employed reached a new high of 2,147,481.

NEW AUSTRIAN EXPORT RECORD. Austrian exports during July 1955, which represented a total value of 1,576 million schillings, established a new record. This sum was 4% higher than the figure for June 1955 and 19% higher than that for July 1954. Imports during July 1955 were 12 million schillings less than those during June, but 550 million schillings, or 43%, higher than those of July 1954.

In terms of types of merchandise, there was an increase of approximately 47 million schillings in the import of foodstuffs, due mainly to extensive wheat imports. Coal imports were also 41 million schillings higher than during the previous month, whereas nearly all other raw material exports registered decreases. The principal increases in exports were in the fields of textiles, glass products and machinery.

AUSTRIAN EPU SURPLUS CONTINUES THROUGH AUGUST.

During the month of August 1955, Austria had a credit balance of 1.2 million dollars in her clearing operations with the European Payments Union (EPU). Since the credit balances were newly drawn up during August, Austria had assets amounting to 23.9 million clearing units with EPU as of the end of that month.

NEW ZINC SMELTING PLANT MEETS AUSTRIA'S TOTAL ZINC REQUIREMENT.

On September 9, 1955, full-scale operations were started at the new zinc smelting plant in Gailitz, Carinthia. The plant has been under construction for three years. The final unit of the plant to be completed was the electrolysis shed containing 128 electrolytic baths, each of them capable of producing up to 550 lbs. of zinc per day. The new plant can satisfy all of Austria's zinc requirements, which amount to approximately 7,500 tons annually. The Gailitz zinc works are one component of the Bleiberg Mining Union, which also processes Carinthian-mined lead ore into lead metal and which has spent almost 10 million dollars on new investments since 1945. Hitherto, the zinc ore mined in Carinthia had to be sent abroad for processing on contract basis. Using filter residues, the new plant will produce approximately 19 tons of cadmium metal annually. This metal will be nearly 100% pure.

VIENNA'S 1955 FALL FAIR HIGHLY SUCCESSFUL. The Vienna International Fall Fair for 1955, which closed on September 18, featured exhibits of 3,750 companies in 17 different countries. The products of 1,487 foreign companies were displayed by 743 foreign exhibitors. In the latter category, the United States was represented by 54 individual companies and, for the first time, by an official display. The American exhibit was keyed primarily to the need of expanding multilateral trade and presented a picture not only of the merchandise which the U.S. has to offer but also of American production and distribution methods. The 1955 Fall Fair was attended by a larger number of visitors than any of Vienna's fairs since the war.

NEW OIL-DRILLING ACTIVITY IN AUSTRIA. The first oil-well derrick in the Timelkam-Puchkirchen area of Upper Austria was recently placed in operation by the Rohoel A.G. The new derrick, which is of the "Ideco" type, can penetrate to depths of 13,000 ft. On the basis of the latest estimates, it is assumed that oil is present at the same depth in the vicinity of Bad Hall, where negotiations are under way with a view to drilling operations there.

A short time ago, a depth-drilling installation, functioning with the rotary method, went into operation for the first time at one of the Rohoel A.G. fields in the Zistersdorf area. This unit, built by Austria's Schoeller-Bleckmann Steel Works for operations at a depth of 9,800 ft., struck oil at 9,150 ft., after 1,339 hours of drilling.

RECORD RECEIPTS FROM TOURISTS. During the first seven months of 1955, tourism in Austria netted foreign exchange in the amount of 1,280 million schillings, compared with 1,160 million for the same period of 1954. Of this total, 535 million were earned in the month of July alone. Taking the average of the entire period, more than 75% of the foreign

visitors came to Austria by automobile or by bus. The number of travellers coming by rail from the direction of Switzerland was only 10%. The number of foreign tourists from the United States, Western Germany, Holland, France and England showed increases varying from 11% to 33%, compared with the previous year.

PRESS REPORTS RESUMPTION OF AUSTRIAN AUTO PRODUCTION. According to reports in the Austrian press, the Steir-Daimler-Puch Works in Graz, Styria, are presently at work on the production of a small automobile which would represent the first Austrian car of this type to be manufactured after an interruption of 20 years. According to the present stage of tests with the vehicle, it should be ready for mass production in the spring of 1956 and it will have 24 HP and a top speed of 56 mph. Since at the present time there is a heavy demand in Austria for small automobiles, it is expected that the first type of car to be built under the resumed production program will get off to a good start.

VEHICULAR INDUSTRY INCREASES PRODUCTION 50 PERCENT. During the first half of 1955, production of the Austrian vehicular industry represented a value of 1.65 billion schillings, or an increase of 50% compared with 1954. A total of 196,957 vehicles, gasoline engines and trailers were produced during this period. The leading producer in this field was the bicycle industry, with 93,086 units, followed by the producers of motor bicycles (22,405 units), motorcycles (20,204) and motor scooters (12,953). During the same period, a total of 4,769 passenger vehicles was assembled and, 6,687 tractors were built. The number of motors constructed was 22,252.

CHEMICAL PRODUCTION IN FIRST HALF OF 1955. Production in the Austrian chemical industry during the first half of 1955 represented an increase in value of approximately 19% over the figures for the first half of 1954. Calcium carbide production rose 37% and there was a ready market for industrial gases. Employment in the rubber and asbestos goods industry was favorable, while the lacquer industry reported an improvement in the employment and sales situation compared with the previous year. The printing ink industry made great advances in the production of special products. Production in the field of chemical mineral dyes rose 15%. The export trade in minium, lithopone and white lead registered noteworthy success. Compared with the previous year, the production of protective agents for structural work doubled. Tar production was also 30% higher. The soap and detergent industry reports generally good sales, with toilet soaps showing a particular increase and with the newly developed phosphate-type detergents making a good start. The plastics industry also reports a continued increase in production.

AUSTRIAN DRUGS AMONG WORLD'S FINEST. Austria's pharmaceutical industry has been able to increase its production over the past few years to the point where it can satisfy 80 per cent of domestic demand. While in 1950 total drug production was valued at 4,384,000 schillings, the 1954 total rose to 10,500,000 schillings and exports during these same two years rose from 180,776 to 538,461 schil-

lings. The high quality of Austrian drugs and medicines, which today are among the world's finest and cheapest, enable them to be sold even to countries with highly developed pharmaceutical industries of their own, such as West Germany and Switzerland. It has also been possible of late years to expand domestic production of the basic chemical materials needed for the development of new products, particularly of the synthetic type. In some of these cases, not only is domestic demand filled but part of this new production can also be exported.

CULTURE AND SCIENCE

NOBEL PRIZE WINNER SCHROEDINGER RETURNS TO VIENNA. Dr. Erwin Schroedinger, an Austrian Nobel Prize winner, has accepted an invitation from Vienna University to resume his teaching activity in Vienna at the beginning of 1956. Professor Schroedinger was awarded the Nobel Prize for Physics in 1953 for his work in the field of wave mechanics, which forms the foundation of modern theory on atomic physics. He left Austria in 1938, after the occupation of the country by Hitler and until now has been active at the Institute for Theoretical Physics at the University of Dublin in Ireland.

Professor Schroedinger is the first of the Austrian Nobel Prize winners now living abroad to return to his native country.

WHO HOLDS REGIONAL MEETING IN VIENNA. The Fifth Meeting of the European Regional Committee of the World Health Organization (WHO), which recently convened in Vienna, was attended by representatives from the 24 European nations which are members of WHO, as well as from the UN, the European Council and 12 international organizations which are concerned with matters of health.

Among other things, the conference decided to add the following activities to its action program: a meeting to deal with the prevention of accidents among children, a seminar on child guidance and a training course designed to protect people against atomic rays. It was also decided to hold two international congresses during the present year to deal with effective methods for combatting alcoholism and tuberculosis.

INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS OF MUSICOLOGISTS IN VIENNA. An international congress of musicologists will be held in Vienna June 3-9, 1956. The professional arrangements for the event will be handled by the Austrian Academy of Sciences. The congress will deal with the following fields: History of Music (with special emphasis on Mozart), Musical Bibliography, Editing Principles and Practices of Performance, Comparative Musicology, Psychology of Music and Sociology of Music. Communications may be addressed to the Congress Office at Universitaetsstrasse 10, Vienna IX.

STUDENT EXCHANGE PROGRAM EXPANDED. Scholarship winners from the United States will study in Austria for the first time during the coming school year. At the present time, Austria has a regular exchange scholarship program with the following European countries: the German Federal Republic, England, France, Italy, Belgium, Yugoslavia and Switzerland.

Grants have also been made to students from Afghanistan and Abyssinia and plans have been initiated for an exchange of students with Japan. Most of the foreign students come to study music, Germanic philology and medicine.

Under the Fulbright Agreement existing between the United States and Austria, 60 Austrian students will attend American universities during the coming school year while 48 students from the U.S. will study at Austrian universities. There is also to be an exchange of 15 university teachers and scholars from each of the two countries.

AUSTRIAN GOVERNMENT TO HOLD GALA MOZART RECEPTION. The Austrian Federal Government is planning to hold a gala reception at Klessheim Castle in Salzburg on January 27, 1956, in honor of the 200th anniversary of the birth of Mozart. The reception will be one event of the Mozart Festival Week which is to be celebrated at that time.

JAPANESE MOZART ENTHUSIASTS. The meeting of the Central Institute for Research on Mozart which recently concluded in Salzburg was concerned primarily with the new edition of Mozart's works in their entirety and with the attendant problems of editing technique and performance usages. A source of general astonishment was the fact that of the 630 subscriptions to the new edition which have been received thus far, 105 have come from Japan, as against only 72 from the United States and 34 from England. Forty-two orders have originated in Austria.

MOZART BIOGRAPHY ON LP RECORD. The conclusion of the 1955 Salzburg Festival marked the first appearance of the "Salzburg Mozart Record," a long-playing record which presents a Mozart biography with sound, in the form of a literary-musical radio broadcast. The spoken text of the record, which refers to no fewer than 16 different Mozart works, is read by Professor Bernhard Paumgartner, the famous Mozart scholar and director of the Mozarteum.

JOSEPH WITT APPOINTED CHIEF STAGE DIRECTOR OF STATE OPERA. Dr. Karl Boehm, Director of the Vienna State opera, has appointed Professor Joseph Witt as Chief Stage Director of the company, effective September 1, 1955. Professor Witt has dissolved his unexpired contract with the Teatro Colon in Buenos Aires, where he was scheduled to stage three more productions during the present fall season.

SECESSION GALLERY HONORS PROFESSOR WOTRUBA. Vienna's Secession Gallery has awarded the Gustav Klimt Prize, its highest honor, to Professor Fritz Wotruba. The prize was given as a tribute for the successful exhibition of a collection of his works in the United States.

VIENNA HONORS FRANZ T. CSOKOR. On September 6th, the City of Vienna celebrated the 70th birthday of the famous Austrian writer, Professor Franz Theodor Csokor, by presenting him with its Ring of Honor. One of the most outstanding writers on the contemporary literature scene, Franz T. Csokor represents all Austrian writers internationally as president of the Austrian PEN Club.

BURGTHEATER TO OPEN WITH OFFICIAL CEREMONY ON OCT. 14. The national ceremony in connection with the opening of the new Burgtheater on Vienna's Ringstrasse has now been definitely scheduled for October 14, 1955. The proceedings will conclude with a performance of Goethe's "Prelude in the Theater," featuring Werner Kraus, Raoul Aslan and Hermann Thimig. This will be followed by the opening premiere, "King Ottokar's Rise and Fall" by Grillparzer, which will remain on the repertory until October 21. The second opening premiere, Schiller's "Don Carlos," will be played from October 22-27. The third premiere, Goethe's "Torquato Tasso," is scheduled for October 28.

TRIAL TELECASTS IN AUSTRIA SUCCESSFUL. The Austrian television network will include in its series of experimental telecasts the national ceremony and the gala opening of the rebuilt Burgtheater, on October 14 and 15 respectively. The television organization, which currently has 6 cameras at its disposal, will have twice that number by the time the State Opera opens. At the same time the studios will be transferred from their temporary quarters in the Vienna Buergertheater, which until recently served as the studio of the American "Red-White-Red" network. At the beginning of September, the number of television sets in Austria was approximately 2,500, but since the initiation of the experimental telecasts by "Austrian Radio" in recent weeks, the sale of sets has greatly increased. Even before this development, telecasts by German networks were picked up in the Western parts of Austria.

According to a recent announcement in Vienna, the experimental programs show that one minute of telecasting currently costs approximately 1,000 schillings.

ST. HUBERTUS ORDER TO HOLD INTERNATIONAL MEET IN STYRIA. The International Hunting Order of St. Hubertus will hold its 1955 international meet in the Walster area of Styria, from Oct. 21-23, 1955. The event will begin with the traditional Hubertus Hunt on October 21. The program which includes hunting dog trials and shooting contests, will conclude on October 23 with a solemn hunters' mass at the Hubertus Chapel on Lake Walster.

—THE REBUILT VIENNA OPERA—

After an interruption of more than ten years, the Vienna Opera on the Ringstrasse will resume its position as one of the world's great centers of the opera with a gala performance of Beethoven's "Fidelio" on November 5, 1955.

As is well known, the famous building which first opened its doors on May 25, 1869, was hit by fire bombs and numerous incendiaries during an air attack on Vienna March 12, 1945, and a fire which raged for 24 hours destroyed a large part of the building. The whole roof of the theater was destroyed, as were the sets and properties for 120 operas as well as more than 160,000 costumes. The two side walls were left standing to a height of about 110 ft. and along a length of 263 ft. The entire auditorium and stage, together with adjoining installations and back-stage area were completely demolished and burned. The only sections which remained undamaged were the front part, including the vesti-

NEWS FROM AUSTRIAN FILM STUDIOS. The Austrian director, Marischka, is currently working on a new film about Emperor Franz Joseph I and Empress Elizabeth which is to be entitled "Sissi." Produced in Vienna, the new picture will feature Romy Schneider in the role of the young Princess Sissi, her mother Magda Schneider will play Sissi's mother Ludowika in the movie and the young Emperor will be portrayed by Karl Heinz Boehm, the son of Dr. Karl Boehm, director of the Vienna State Opera. The outdoor scenes of the picture are being filmed at Lofer in the province of Salzburg.

After completing her work in "Sissi," Romy Schneider will play the role of Luise in Harald Brown's film version of Schiller's "Kabale und Liebe."

Hilde Wagner, one of Austria's leading actresses, will play opposite O.W. Fischer in the role of the Head Nurse, Leeming, in the film "Die Goetter lachen," an Aura-Film version of the Cronin play "Jupiter lacht" which goes into production on October 20, 1955. This will follow her role as Baroness Wulfen, the governess of the young Princess Elisabeth, in the Marischka film "Sissi."

Rudolph Jugert will shortly produce a film version of A.H. Lehmann's famous novel "Hengst Maestoso Austria," based on a script by Jacob Geis, Joachim Wedekind and A.H. Lehmann.

The 17-year-old daughter of the famous stage couple, Paula Wessely and Attila Hoerbiger, recently accepted her first film assignment. She is to play a leading part in "Der Major und die Stiere" which will feature her father Attila Hoerbiger and be directed by Eduard von Borsody.

The Sascha-Film Company in Vienna will shortly start work on a technicolor film dealing with the mysterious death of Crown Prince Rudolph, the heir to the former Austrian throne, and Baroness Mary Vetsera, who committed suicide at a hunting lodge in Mayerling, near Vienna, on January 30, 1889. The role of the Austrian Prince will be played by Rudolf Prack and the film will be directed by Rudolph Juger.

bule and central staircase, and part of the foyer on the first floor.

The fact that the valuable dressed-stone outer shell of the building was almost 90 percent preserved, together with its advantageous location in the center of Vienna and its association with a glorious opera tradition, lent support to the decision to build the new opera house on the site of and in the style of its predecessor. Before reconstruction could be started, it was necessary to remove 5,000 tons of rubble and 1,500 tons of scrap iron. Two major architectural contests were held for the purpose of finding an appropriate design for the new theater. The plans finally selected were those submitted by Professor Erich Boltenstern of the Technological University and the Vienna Academy of Fine Arts and by the Architect, Prossinger. Boltenstern undertook to carry out the reconstruction of the audi-

torium, the new staircases and the intermission lobbies in the third and fourth galleries, while the architects Prossinger and Kosak will be responsible for the architectural details of the large intermission halls in the first gallery.

New Opera House to Retain Traditional Box Seats

The decision to incorporate those parts of the old building which had not been destroyed brought with it a decision to continue the tradition of a theater with boxes. As the reconstruction work progressed, there was an extensive redistribution of the rooms surrounding the auditorium. Thus, the Imperial Hall, the former administrative offices, smoking salon, foyer hall and the salon of the first gallery have been replaced by new and modern intermission lobbies. The first gallery also features several rooms for special occasions which have a total length of 395 ft. and surround the auditorium in the shape of a U. A leading consideration in the development of new arrangement of the rooms was the possibility of their being used for official receptions and congresses. The extension of the roofs to form large terraces over the front part of the building occupied by the auditorium provides the public of the third and fourth galleries with new opportunities for promenading.

In principle, the auditorium has been restored to its earlier form. However, thanks to the construction of suspended ceilings, it has been possible to eliminate the pillars of the third and fourth galleries, which were always a disturbing factor. In the lower galleries (parterre, first and second galleries), the old distribution of the boxes, including the big center loge and the two-story proscenium loges, has



One of the Restored Foyers

been kept. The third and fourth galleries will have no boxes. The entire auditorium will be decorated in the traditional red-gold-ivory color scheme. The difficult task of combining modern decoration and form with the older setting and color arrangements may be considered as having been completely and felicitously solved.

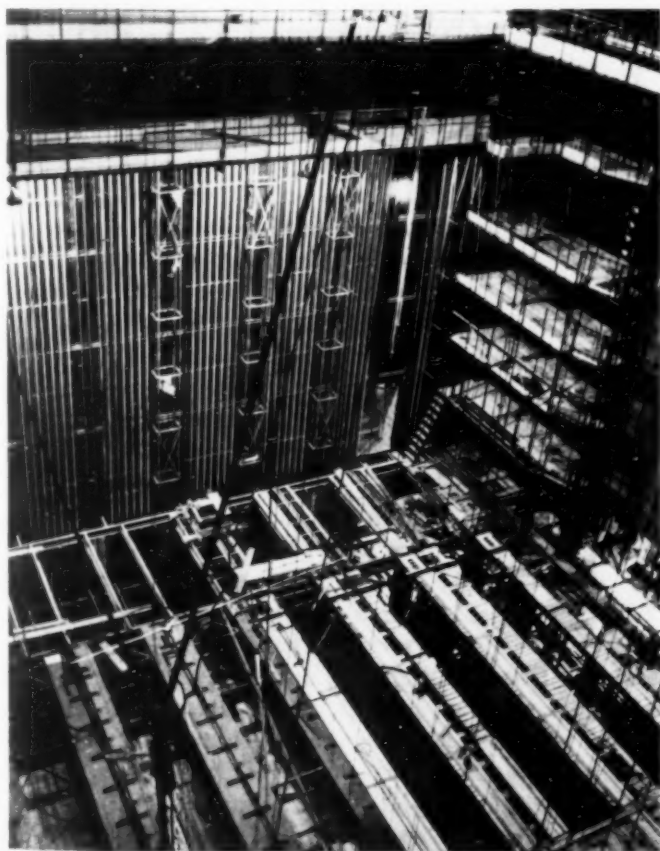
House Will Accomodate Audience of 2200

In compliance with police regulations, a new distribution of places has been made, so that the theater now has 1,649 seats and room for 551 standees. The old opera house was able to accommodate 2,324 persons, after its original capacity of 2,881 had to be reduced in 1901 in accordance with new regulations. The rows of seats are 32 inches apart, while the seats themselves have widths varying from 21 to 23 inches. The reinforced concrete construction work in the auditorium area has been completely covered with wood, which will have the acoustic effect of a huge sounding board.

Since the world-famous chandelier illuminating the entire auditorium had to be eliminated even earlier for reasons of safety, a huge ring-shaped lighting fixture of crystal glass has been selected for the new building. It will surround the opening installed in the center of the ceiling for purposes of ventilation. Until 1887, the house was illuminated by means of 6,000 separate gas lights.

Among the innovations in the new house are several seats with loud-speaker installations for the hard-of-hearing and aisle-end seats with lamps for persons reading scores.

The guiding idea behind the reconstruction of the stage area was to eliminate everything from the building which was not absolutely essential. Thus, all of the theater workshops, including those of the dressmakers and headdress makers as well as the entire costume wardrobe, have been transferred to a special theater-operations building in the immediate vicinity. This building is connected directly with the opera house by means of a subterranean tunnel and will also include the administrative offices, employee lodgings and quarters for visiting artists, which were previously located in the opera house itself. The storehouse for sets in the opera building itself was reduced to a capacity of 20 sets. In addition to the modern ballet rehearsal rooms



The New Stage Under Construction in 1954

with their exemplary equipment, the new building also features a special rehearsal room for great symphony orchestras, large choruses and for a complete ensemble, as well as a 45 by 86 ft. rehearsal stage. There are also ten rehearsal rooms for soloists.

The orchestra pit is designed to accommodate 110 musicians but can be expanded to a maximum of 1,325 sq. ft.

One of World's Largest Stages

The proscenium in the reconstructed building was increased to 40 x 80 ft. With a total height of 89 ft., the main stage occupies an area of 25,350 cu. ft. The back-stage area has been extended to the same width as the main stage, so that the two stages can be combined into a single stage, 164 ft. long and with an area of 40,600 cu. ft., for operas with mass parade scenes, such as "Aida" and "Die Meistersinger." The height from the base of the lowered stage to the roof of the gridiron is 148 ft. By placing a roof over an inner court, an additional side stage with an area of 3,980 sq. ft. was created.

The following mechanism is available for changes of scenery on the stage: the floor of the main stage is divided into six movable sections which can be hydraulically raised as much as 8 ft. and lowered 36 ft. This makes it possible to prepare changes of scenery on a production-line basis, either below or behind the stage, as well as to make rapid shifts of scenery on the main stage itself. Moreover, by means of horizontal movements, complete scenes prepared on the side stage can be moved out on to the main stage. The main stage also has a turntable 53 ft. in diameter which can be folded after use and hoisted by means of a huge

crane into an opening between the back stage and the roof girders.

Opera to Have Most Modern Technical Equipment in Europe

The lighting panel includes 264 adjustable circuits and provides for centrally controlled illumination of the stage and auditorium with the aid of modern adjustable transformers. Above the big gala loge, invisible to the audience is an electroacoustically equipped sound-control and observation box for the stage managers, the technical director and the lighting engineer. The radio broadcasting room, with observation slots directed toward the stage, is located in the third gallery. Several television outlets have also been installed.

The entire opera house has been equipped with a modern air-conditioning installation, fresh air being pumped in from the Burggarten via an underground tunnel. The opera building together with its operational adjuncts will be heated by means of a remote control heating arrangement. Four iron curtains have been provided as a protection against fire, the main iron curtain separating the main stage and the auditorium and three others sealing off the side and back stages in such a manner as to prevent fire. In the planning of the new house, fire precautions were uppermost and all structural work in wood was replaced by reinforced concrete construction. The former slate roof with its wooden substructure was replaced by a completely fireproof copper shell covering another thin shell of reinforced concrete. Curiously enough, this arrangement represents the realization of a plan which originated with Eduard van der Nuell, the builder of the old opera house.

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